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Celebrate the day of Armageddon

Nuclear Apocalypse now

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Chapter One: Ashes in the Sky

The world had been burning for so long that no one could remember the color of the sky.

Smoke curled over cities like an endless winter, blotting out the sun. Somewhere, across the oceans, nations fought battles no one dared name anymore. Maps were redrawn and shredded again, borders shifting like tides. They called it the Third War, as if numbering it could tame it, as if it were just another chapter in the long, ugly book of human history.

But this war felt different. It wasn't just soldiers dying in trenches or cities flattened by bombs—it was the feeling that something essential had cracked in humanity itself. People whispered in underground stations and ruined marketplaces that the earth had grown tired of them, and that perhaps the sky, black and silent, had grown tired too.

On a cold evening in November, when the smoke turned the sunset into a smear of rust, the first of the ships appeared.

No one saw them at first—they didn’t blaze across the heavens like in the old movies. They simply *arrived*, vast and silent, hanging in the sky like a question no one wanted to answer. Over London. Over Beijing. Over Lagos. Over New York.

And for the first time in decades, the guns fell quiet.

It wasn’t peace. It was dread.

Chapter Two: The Visitors

The ships didn’t move. They didn’t flash weapons or make demands.
They just *watched*.

For days, the world stared back. Scientists scrambled to decipher the strange metallic symbols that shimmered across their hulls. Governments issued trembling statements about “calm” and “patience,” though their armies stayed on hair-trigger alert.

And then, on the fifth day, the first voice came.

It wasn’t a voice anyone heard with their ears. It slid into minds like an unwelcome thought, spoken in tones both silky and cold.

“We are the Eridani. You will not understand us, but you will obey. Give us what we require.”

The words echoed across every mind, from the prime ministers hiding in bunkers to the children clutching their parents in the dark.

And then came the list.

Not gold.
Not oil.
Not food.

Uranium.

The Eridani wanted every scrap of it, from every mine, from every warhead buried in silos.

Some leaders argued. Some tried to bargain. The ships moved for the first time. A single beam lanced from the sky over New Delhi—a beam that left a crater where a million souls had lived.

There were no more arguments.

Within weeks, uranium caravans crawled across shattered highways. Nations that had been enemies for decades traded their weapons to appease the strangers. For a moment, the Third War ended, not out of peace, but out of fear.

Yet as the convoys rolled on, the Eridani grew bolder. They took more than uranium. They took people.

Chapter Three: A Boy Named Eli

Eli was twelve the first time he saw one of the ships up close.

It floated over the hills outside his village, a silver shadow blotting out the moon, so massive it made the ground hum. The grown-ups told the children not to look, but how could they not? Eli stood barefoot in the dirt road, craning his neck until it hurt, staring at the silent monster in the sky.

His mother pulled him back toward the house, her grip tight.
“Inside,” she hissed. “Now.”

The government men had come through the week before, uniforms dusty, eyes hollow, demanding to know if there was uranium in the ground nearby. No one in the village knew. They were farmers, not miners. But the soldiers dug anyway, tearing up the fields, leaving mounds of black earth where the wheat used to grow.

That night, Eli heard a sound.

Not the hum of the ship—that low, endless vibration had already become like wind or rain. This was sharper.
A scream.

He pressed his face to the window. In the field below, pillars of light slid down from the ship, like fingers touching the earth. Figures moved inside those beams—**Eridani.**

No one had seen them this close before. They were tall, too tall, their limbs thin and bending strangely, their skin the color of ash. They didn't walk so much as **unfold**, like paper being turned into shapes.

Eli watched them move from house to house, and each time the light touched a door, someone was pulled into the sky.

Neighbors. Friends.

When they reached Eli's house, his mother shoved him into the cellar. "Stay quiet," she whispered.

“Don’t make a sound, no matter what you hear.”

She closed the hatch just as the door burst open.

Eli never saw her again.

Chapter Four: Ash and Silence

The night lasted forever.

Eli lay in the cellar, knees pulled to his chest, the wooden boards above him trembling with every strange hum and hiss. Once, he heard boots—human boots—stomping across the floor. Then a thud, like a sack of grain hitting the ground. Then silence again, broken only by the low, electric sigh of the ship outside.

When morning finally came, it was gray and empty.

He pushed open the hatch, dust falling into his hair, and crept into what used to be his home. The table was overturned. The bread his mother had baked sat in the dirt, crushed. The door hung loose on its hinges, and beyond it—the village was gone.

Not burned. Not bombed.
Just… gone.

The houses still stood, but the people had been scraped away, like chalk from a slate.

He wandered the road, calling names he didn’t dare shout. **“Mama?”** Nothing answered except the wind.

At the edge of the fields, a convoy passed—rusting trucks with the government’s insignia painted over with thick black lines, driven by men with hollow eyes. In the beds of the trucks: barrels, crates, metal canisters marked with a symbol Eli didn’t recognize.

One of the soldiers spotted him. “Boy!” the man barked. “Get inside before they come back!”

But there was no “inside” anymore.

That night, Eli slept under the skeleton of the old church. He watched the ships move across the sky like dark moons, and for the first time, he wondered if anyone would stop them.

Somewhere far away, people whispered about **resistance**—bands of fighters who refused to bow, scientists working on weapons in secret bunkers. But to Eli, those were only stories.

And in stories, heroes always came.

He just didn’t know yet if anyone was coming for him.

Chapter Five: The Council of Ashes

The meeting was not supposed to happen.

Old enemies were not meant to sit at the same table, but fear is the great equalizer. In an underground chamber beneath Geneva, leaders from the fractured nations of the world faced one another for the first time since the Third War began.

The room smelled of dust and stale air, lit only by flickering lamps. There were no flags on the table—those had been stripped away.

President Harrow of the Western Federation leaned forward, his voice low. “We keep giving them uranium. Every shipment buys us another week. Another day. But at this rate—”

“They will drain the earth dry,” interrupted Chancellor Weiss of the Northern Bloc, her voice sharp as glass. “And then they will take more than uranium. You’ve all seen the disappearances.”

No one spoke for a long moment. Everyone had

seen. Entire towns gone, wiped clean like chalk from stone.

General Zhao of the Eastern Pact slammed a fist onto the table. “We cannot keep feeding the beast. We must fight.”

President Harrow’s lips tightened. “We tried fighting. You saw New Delhi.”

The name hung in the air like a curse.

A quiet voice broke the silence. Professor Kareem, a thin, gray-haired physicist brought from the ruins of Cairo, stood at the far end of the table. “There is… another way.”

All eyes turned to him.

He spoke carefully, as if the walls themselves might be listening. “We have theories—untested, dangerous—about antimatter. It could destroy their ships. All of them. But…”

“But what?” Weiss demanded.

“But antimatter is not a weapon you hold,” Kareem said. “It is a star you unleash. If we succeed, we drive them away. If we fail…”

He didn’t finish the sentence. He didn’t need to.

For a long time, no one moved. The leaders of the world stared at one another across that table, knowing that trust was a luxury they had buried long ago.

But as the hum of the alien ships echoed even through the concrete walls, they all understood the same thing:

They were out of time.

Chapter Six: Shadows and Sparks

Eli hadn’t spoken to anyone in three days.

The roads were empty now, except for the convoys—government trucks hauling barrels of uranium to the collection points. He learned to hide when he heard the engines, crouching in the ditches until the sound faded.

On the fourth day, they found him.

At first, he thought it was the soldiers again. Men in ragged coats stepped from the trees, rifles slung over their shoulders, faces hard. But their coats bore no insignias, and their guns were mismatched—old weapons scavenged from a dozen forgotten wars.

“Boy,” one of them said, crouching to meet Eli’s eyes. “Where are your parents?”

Eli stared at the dirt. He didn’t answer.

The man didn’t press. Instead, he held out a hand.

“Name’s Rafe. We won’t hurt you.”

Behind him, more figures emerged—a woman with a bandage across her face, another man dragging a cart full of stolen rations, even a teenager barely older than Eli clutching a pistol too big for his hands.

The resistance.

They moved at night, slipping between the cracks of the crumbling world. Their camp was hidden in the ruins of an old factory, its broken windows covered with sheets of metal, its machines long dead.

For the first time since his mother disappeared, Eli wasn’t alone.

That night, by the flicker of a barrel fire, he listened to them talk.

“They’ve got scientists,” Rafe said, tossing a twig into the flames. “Somewhere in the mountains. Say they’re working on something that can stop the bastards.”

“Stop them?” the bandaged woman scoffed. “Or kill us all trying.”

Eli said nothing. He just stared into the fire, remembering the way the alien lights had dragged people into the sky, the way his mother’s voice had trembled when she shoved him into the cellar.

For the first time, he felt something new stir in his chest—**not fear, not grief.**

Something sharper.

Chapter Seven: Fire in the Convoy

The plan was simple.

Or at least, Rafe said it was.

“Convoy comes through the canyon at dawn,” he explained, crouching over a rough map scratched into the dirt. “Two trucks, maybe three. We hit ’em fast, take what we can, and disappear before the drones come sniffing.”

Eli sat on a rock, clutching the too-large coat they’d given him. He wanted to ask why they needed to hit the convoy at all. But he already knew the answer: food, medicine, and—most importantly—uranium.

Not to hand over.
To hide.

At first light, they were in position. The canyon was a scar in the earth, narrow and deep, with jagged rocks stacked like broken teeth. The resistance fighters crouched behind boulders, their breath fogging in the cold.

Eli stayed low, heart thundering. He wasn't supposed to fight. Rafe had told him, "Just stay behind me, keep your head down." But something in him wouldn't stop buzzing—the same sharp feeling he'd felt by the fire the night before.

The rumble came first.

Two trucks, engines rattling, rolled into the canyon. The barrels in the back glowed faintly under the morning light—uranium, marked with alien symbols now.

Rafe raised his fist. The fighters moved.

The first shot cracked through the air, and chaos erupted. Resistance fighters swarmed from the rocks, firing rifles, tossing smoke bombs. The soldiers riding shotgun scrambled for cover.

Eli's ears rang. He pressed himself against a rock, peeking out as one of the trucks swerved, slamming into the canyon wall.

Rafe shouted, “Get the barrels! Move!”

Eli didn’t think. He ran.

His feet hit the gravel, his breath sharp in his chest. He grabbed the side of the overturned truck, hauling himself up, hands scraping metal. Behind him, a soldier shouted, and a shot cracked past his ear.

For a second, the world shrank to one choice: run back to the rocks, or keep climbing.

Eli climbed.

He threw his weight against one of the barrels, feeling it shift—just enough to roll toward the edge of the truck.

And then, the hum came.

Deep. Low. Terrifyingly familiar.

Above the canyon, a shadow fell.

One of the alien ships was coming.

Chapter Eight: When the Sky Opened

The hum grew louder until it felt like it was inside Eli’s bones.

He froze on the overturned truck as a shadow consumed the canyon. The air turned heavy, humming like a storm that hadn’t broken yet.

“**Scatter!**” Rafe’s voice ripped through the chaos. “**Scatter now!**”

The resistance fighters dove behind rocks, dragging wounded comrades, abandoning barrels. One man kept firing up at the sky, screaming curses—until a beam of light lanced down and erased him, leaving only a black scorch on the ground.

Eli’s breath came in short, sharp gasps. The barrel he had been pushing slipped from his hands, rolling into the dirt.

The ship wasn’t as big as the ones that had hovered over the cities—it was smaller, sleeker, a hunter. Its hull shimmered like liquid metal, reflecting the pale

dawn, and then it split open.

Figures dropped from the sky.

Three Eridani.

They unfolded from the beam like shadows stretching in reverse. Their limbs moved wrong—too long, too smooth—and their gray skin seemed to drink in the light.

Eli couldn't look away.

One of them turned its head toward him.
No mouth. No eyes he could see. Just smooth, cold skin.

And yet somehow, Eli knew it was *looking at him.*

"Human," a voice echoed—not in his ears, but deep in his mind. *"Do not interfere."*

Eli's knees buckled. He wanted to crawl into the dirt and vanish.

But then Rafe shouted, “**Fall back! Get the boy!**”

Something snapped inside Eli. He wasn’t sure if it was bravery or fear twisting into something else, but his hand shot out, grabbing the barrel again—not to save it, but to shove it hard.

It tumbled from the truck, slamming into the dirt—and cracked open.

A hiss filled the air as the uranium inside spilled out, glowing faintly in the dust.

The Eridani nearest him paused, tilting its head, as if curious.

Then someone fired.

A shot rang out. The alien staggered—not hurt, not really, but startled. It turned sharply toward the shooter, and in that heartbeat of distraction, Rafe grabbed Eli, yanking him off the truck.

“Run!”

They bolted toward the rocks, bullets and beams slicing the air. Behind them, the spilled uranium hissed and smoked as one of the barrels caught fire.

The canyon filled with light.

Chapter Nine: The First Spark

The lab wasn’t much of a lab at all.

It was a hollowed-out bunker carved into the roots of a mountain, its walls damp and cold. The scientists worked under buzzing lights, surrounded by scavenged machines dragged in from ruined universities and abandoned research centers.

On the steel table lay a metal sphere, no larger than a grapefruit.

Professor Kareem stood over it, his wrinkled hands steady, though his eyes betrayed the sleepless nights behind them. Around him, a dozen other scientists hovered—some physicists, some engineers, some former weapons makers. All of them were afraid.

“Check the containment field again,” Kareem said quietly.

A woman with trembling hands tapped at an old console. “Stable—for now.”

“‘For now’ is not enough,” snapped Dr. Fischer, the youngest among them, his voice cracking with frustration. “If the field collapses—”

“It won’t,” Kareem interrupted.

But even he didn’t sound sure.

On the far side of the room, a monitor flickered, patched into the Council of Ashes meeting chamber deep underground. The leaders’ faces stared out, grainy and distorted by poor signal.

Chancellor Weiss leaned forward. “Professor, how close are you?”

Kareem hesitated. “Closer than we should be.”

President Harrow’s voice was sharp. “We don’t have the luxury of caution. Every day they strip more uranium, take more of our people. We need a weapon.”

Kareem looked back at the metal sphere. It hummed

faintly, the way a storm hums before it breaks.

“Antimatter is not a weapon,” he said. “It’s annihilation.”

“And yet you keep building it,” Weiss said flatly.

Kareem didn’t answer.

Instead, he motioned to the team. “Activate the field.”

A low whine filled the bunker as the containment unit powered up. The sphere glowed faintly—white, not bright, but *wrong*, like a hole in the world.

Everyone held their breath.

For a moment, it worked. The containment held. The glow stabilized.

Then, a single red light blinked on the console.

“Field integrity—dropping!” the woman shouted.

“Compensate!” Fischer barked, hands flying across controls.

The whine rose into a screech. The glow pulsed. The walls shook.

Kareem’s voice cut through the panic, calm but deadly serious.

“If this fails, we won’t have time to run.”

Chapter Ten: Containment Breach

The glow swelled.

The metal sphere on the table trembled, as if something inside it was trying to claw its way out. The hum in the bunker deepened into a low, bone-shaking roar.

“Shut it down!” Dr. Fischer shouted, fingers hammering the console.
“It won’t respond!” the technician screamed.

Red lights flared across the panels. One by one, alarms wailed.

Professor Kareem didn’t move. He stood perfectly still, eyes locked on the sphere. The air around it rippled—like heat over desert sand, but colder, sharper. Papers lifted off tables. Bolts rattled in their sockets.

“The containment field is collapsing!”

Someone screamed the words. No one needed to

hear them. They could all *feel* it.

For a split second, Kareem's thoughts weren't of science or war.
He thought of Cairo.
Of his daughter.
Of what would happen if this tiny, glowing thing on the table unleashed itself.

"Fischer," Kareem said, voice steady, "cut the feed."

Fischer froze. "What?"

"Cut. The. Feed."

The younger man's eyes went wide. "That'll kill the experiment—"

"And save this mountain!" Kareem barked.

Fischer's hands slammed a heavy switch.

The room plunged into darkness.

The hum died in an instant, leaving only the shallow

gasps of the scientists and the echo of alarms winding down. For several heartbeats, no one moved.

Then, slowly, the emergency lights flickered on.

The sphere sat on the table, dark again, silent.

But not unchanged.

Kareem stepped closer. His reflection wavered in the metal surface—not like a mirror, but like water. The sphere was *different now*. Not damaged. Not inert.

Alive.

Behind him, Chancellor Weiss's voice crackled through the monitor, tinny and sharp:
"Professor Kareem, what happened?"

Kareem didn't answer immediately.

He just stared at the thing they had almost lost control of—and the thing they would one day

unleash.

Chapter Eleven: After the Fire

Smoke still curled in the cold morning air.

The canyon was a scarred battlefield. Charred earth and shattered rocks lay scattered beneath the broken sky. The once-steady hum of the alien ship was gone, vanished like a fading nightmare.

Eli sat on a jagged stone, his coat stained with dirt and ash. His hands trembled, the taste of smoke bitter on his tongue. Around him, the resistance fighters gathered—some nursing wounds, others counting losses.

Rafe approached, face grim but steady. “We lost good people today.”

Eli looked up, meeting his gaze. “What now?”

Rafe sighed. “Now, we survive. And we fight smarter.”

The uranium barrels they had tried to steal were gone—destroyed in the fireball that erupted when

Eli’s shove cracked one open. The aliens had retreated, but for how long?

Somewhere far above, the sky remained a cold gray. No ships hovered now, but Eli knew better than to think the danger was over.

“We need to find the others,” Rafe said. “The scientists, the council. We need a plan that can end this.”

Eli’s eyes burned with something new—resolve. The boy who had once hidden in a cellar was now part of a fight much bigger than himself.

He stood, dusting ash from his sleeves. “Then let’s find a way.”

The road ahead was dark and uncertain, but Eli knew one thing for sure: humanity would not give up.

Here’s **Chapter Twelve: Fractures** — shifting back to the council and scientists, tensions rise as the antimatter project pushes forward.

Chapter Twelve: Fractures

The Council chamber was colder than ever.

The leaders no longer met as allies, but as wary prisoners of circumstance. The glow from the projector cast long shadows on their faces—faces etched with exhaustion and fear.

Chancellor Weiss stared at Professor Kareem's report, her hands clenched. "You're telling me the containment nearly failed. That this weapon could destroy us all?"

Kareem nodded, voice tight. "It's why we must be cautious. But the Eridani won't wait. They're growing bolder."

President Harrow slammed his fist on the table. "We don't have the luxury of 'caution' anymore. Every day we delay, they take more from us."

General Zhao leaned forward, eyes cold. "If the weapon fails, it will tear us apart from within. If it succeeds—"

“Then we finally have a chance,” Weiss finished grimly.

The room fell silent.

Outside the bunker, sirens wailed as distant skirmishes flared anew. The war was far from over, and the fragile alliance inside this chamber was beginning to crack.

“We move forward,” Harrow said. “With or without consensus.”

Kareem swallowed hard. The spark they had ignited was no longer just science—it was a gamble with the fate of the world.

Chapter Thirteen: The Catalyst

Weeks passed like shadowed breaths in the mountain bunker.

The scientists worked around the clock, driven by desperation and hope in equal measure. Every failure was met with weary determination; every small success, a flicker of light against the dark.

Professor Kareem stood before the glowing sphere once more. It pulsed softly, a heartbeat of raw energy contained by fragile walls of technology and human will.

“This time,” Kareem said, “we control it.”

He motioned to the technicians. “Begin the stabilization sequence.”

The air hummed with tension. The containment field hummed, the glow steadied. For a moment, the impossible seemed within reach.

Then, a sudden jolt shook the bunker. Alarms

screamed.

“The field is fluctuating!” a technician yelled.

Kareem’s hands flew over the controls. “Compensate. Stabilize. Now!”

Outside, the world held its breath.

The antimatter weapon was no longer just an experiment. It was the catalyst for either salvation or destruction.

Chapter Fourteen: Lines Drawn

The ruins of the old city stretched around them like a battlefield frozen in time.

Eli moved quietly through the cracked streets, the weight of the resistance on his shoulders. Each step was cautious—every shadow might hide another patrol, every silence a trap.

Rafe walked beside him, a grim reminder that this was no longer a boy's fight. "We have to strike at their supply lines," he said. "Cut off uranium shipments before they can rebuild."

Eli nodded, heart steady. The fight was bigger now, and so was he.

But as they reached their target, the flicker of alien patrol lights on the horizon made one thing clear: the Eridani weren't just waiting. They were coming for war.

Chapter Fifteen: The First Strike

Night had swallowed the city, but Eli’s breath was sharp in the cold air.

The resistance assembled in the shadow of a crumbled warehouse, faces lit by the faint glow of stolen lanterns.

Rafe laid out the plan one last time. “We hit the supply depot hard and fast. No mistakes.”

Eli’s fingers tightened around the makeshift weapon in his hands—a scavenged rifle with a cracked scope. He thought of the people waiting for hope, for a chance to fight back.

The operation began with silent steps and whispered signals.

They moved like ghosts through the ruins, reaching the depot’s perimeter.

Explosions shattered the silence, flames licking the sky as the resistance tore through alien defenses.

Eli fired into the darkness, heart pounding as the battle for humanity’s future blazed around him.

Chapter Sixteen: Reckoning

Smoke and fire filled the night sky, the supply depot burning like a beacon of defiance.

Eli stood among the resistance fighters, chest heaving, eyes scanning the horizon for alien reinforcements.

The Eridani ships appeared like ghosts, descending with deadly precision.

Rafe shouted orders, pushing the fighters to retreat in formation. “Hold the line! Don’t let them surround us!”

Bullets and beams tore through the darkness. Eli felt the sting of a grazing shot but kept moving, firing back with everything he had.

The cost was high. Friends fell, cries echoed.

But in the heart of the chaos, a spark of hope burned—humanity would fight, no matter the cost.

Chapter Seventeen: Breach

The bunker trembled again.

Warnings blared across consoles as containment fields flickered and sputtered.

Professor Kareem’s hands flew over the controls, sweat dripping down his brow. “It’s unstable. We’re close—too close.”

Dr. Fischer’s voice trembled. “If the field collapses now—”

“Shut it down!” Kareem ordered, voice sharp.

But before they could act, a pulse of energy surged outward, throwing the lab into chaos.

Sparks flew. Machines exploded.

And then silence.

The sphere lay dark, but something had changed.

Outside, distant alarms warned of a new threat—one born not of aliens, but of their own desperate reach for power.